

The first freedom

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Eighty-two years ago, Franklin Delano Roosevelt needed to rouse the United States to fight for freedom.

Hitler had spread his tentacles across Europe. Japan was waging a vicious war in China. But after the brutality of the First World War, many Americans remained suspicious of the necessity of American involvement in another overseas conflict.

So in the first State of the Union address of his third term, on Jan. 6, 1941, F.D.R. told them in simple and ringing words why the coming war matted:

We look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms.

—

(HELP ME FIGHT FOR THE FIRST FREEDOM. NOTHING IS MORE IMPORTANT.)

—

The second freedom was religious, “the freedom of every person to worship God in his own way.”

The third was “freedom from want.”

The fourth was “freedom from fear,” by which Roosevelt essentially meant post-war worldwide disarmament.

But the first, the *most* important and basic right, was “freedom of speech and expression--everywhere in the world.”

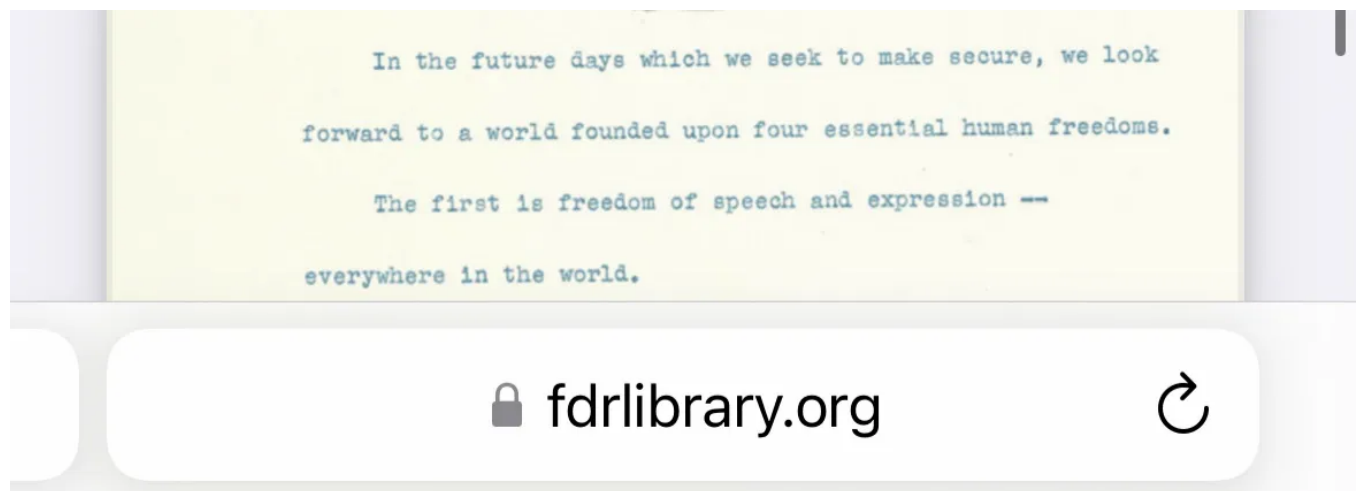
The *First* Amendment.

The *first* freedom.

Notice the trend?

—

(*Those were the days.*)



SOURCE

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We say “freedom of speech.” That’s not really what it is.

It’s freedom of *thought*.

People who can’t say openly what they think for too long are forced into a shadow world. Either they give up the right to have their own view of the world and accept into what society or the government tells them. Or they keep their own views but no longer admit them aloud - and spend more and more time and energy gaslighting *themselves*.

Note that I am *not* using the words truth or lie in this analysis.

That omission is deliberate.

It doesn't actually matter whether the speech is right or wrong, objectively true or false. Indeed, the First Amendment makes no reference to the truth or falsity of the speech it protects. Plenty of people have strange ideas. If I think aliens are real but can't say so, I have lost some essential part of myself.

In 1984, Orwell famously wrote that "the Party told you to reject the evidence of your eyes and ears. It was their final, most essential command."

But going that far isn't necessary, and in fact may be a waste of the Party's energy. The Party doesn't have to care what you think. Only what you *say*.

—

The Nazis lied as a matter of course, as a sport and a pastime.

Roosevelt knew they lied. In the Four Freedoms speech, he decried the "secret spreading of poisonous propaganda by those who seek to destroy unity and promote discord in nations that are still at peace."

But he understood that even faced with the lies of a regime bent on mass death, the United States could not waver in its commitment to freedom of speech.

"A good society is able to face schemes of world domination and foreign revolutions alike without fear," he said. Including the fear of opposing views.

—

(Freedom of turkey! God Bless America!)

OURS...to fight for



Freedom of Speech



Freedom of Worship



Freedom from Want



Freedom from Fear

F.D.R. was a Democrat, of course. And for generations, Democrats saw themselves as the avatars of free speech.

In the 1988 Presidential campaign, Democrat Michael Dukakis called himself a “card-carrying member of the A.C.L.U.” - the American Civil Liberties Union. George H.W. Bush jumped on the line, repeating over and over that he *wasn't* an A.C.L.U. member, until the New York Times finally chided him:

Does Mr. Bush liken membership in the A.C.L.U. to Communism? On what basis does he find support for civil liberties guaranteed by the Constitution to be out of step with the interests of “the people”?

(WHEN YOU CAN'T SPEAK, NOTHING ELSE MATTERS. HELP ME FIGHT.)

But Democrats no longer believe in free speech.

Seventy percent now favor restricting “false information” online. It’s not even clear the New York Times believes in the First Amendment anymore. Two weeks ago it wrote *in a news story* that freedom of speech raises “thorny questions,” including:

Is misinformation protected by the First Amendment? When is it appropriate for the federal government to seek to tamp down the spread of falsehoods?

The answers, as I wrote after that piece ran, are Yes and Never.

In 2020 and particularly 2021, I took generally unpopular stances on Covid and the mRNA shots, positions that ran contrary to federal policies.

I believe the last two years have vindicated my positions completely. But the truth it doesn't matter if I was wrong or right. What matters is that as an American, I had the right to say what I wanted without fear of government interference.

The Trump Administration - as far as I know - respected that right. The Biden Administration did not. (Neither did Pfizer, but that's another story.)

Two years ago yesterday, Twitter gave me my fourth strike - its final warning before my eventual ban. It did so for this tweet:



Alex Berenson 
@AlexBerenson

...

The pivotal clinical trial for the @pfizer #Covid vaccine shows it does nothing to reduce the overall risk of death. ZERO.

15 patients who received the vaccine died; 14 who received placebo died.

The end.

The trial blind is broken now. This is all the data we will ever have.

CD162b2 and 14
placebo recipients
considered relative
CD162b2 and placebo

memory CD4 T cells ($P=0.006$), as all animals in the 30- μ g-dose group had Th1 responses (fig. S6A). By contrast, type 2 T helper (Th2) responses (IL-4⁺ and/or IL-5⁺) were low to undetectable in all vaccine dose groups (fig. S6B). By contrast, CD8 T cell responses were also low to undetectable in all vaccine dose groups (fig. S6E). T follicular helper (Tfh) cells found within secondary lymphoid organs play an

Cristiano Zerbini, Ruth Bailey, Kena A Swanson, Xia Xu, Satrajit Roychoudhury, Kenneth Koury, Salim Bouguermouh, Warren V Kalina, David Cooper, Robert W Frencik Jr., Laura L Hammitt, Özlem Türeci, Haylene Nell, Axel Schaefer, Serhat Ünal, Qi Yang, Paul Liberator, Dina B Tresnan, Susan Mather, Philip R Dormitzer, Uğur Şahin, William C Gruber, Kathrin U Jansen, C4591001 Clinical Trial Group

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The idea that I should not have been allowed to report accurately on the results of Pfizer's own clinical trial defies belief.

Now, as many of you know, I have sued President Biden and other White House officials for their censorship. The wheels of justice grind slow, and the suit has been quiet for a bit, but it's about to pick up again.

I'll have more to say about its specifics soon.

Today, though, I just wanted to remind you of the stakes.
